
FY 2019
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **November 7, 2018**.

(NOTE: Italicized / red comments are for reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

Project Name	Blanco Creek Exploration Project
District Name (or "Forestwide")	Red River
County where project located?	Idaho County
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email <i>If a partnership, please add name, phone and email; however, an FS employee MUST BE the project proponent and point of contact.</i>	Marty Jones (208) 983-5158 martinjones@fs.fed.us
Legal Location <i>Township(s), Range(s), and Section(s) of project.</i>	T28N, R9E, Sections 7, 12, 13, 14, 23
District Ranger / Line Officer's Name <i>Person(s) responsible for signing the decision document</i>	Terry Nevius
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	No
Which CE Category does this project fit? <i>Provide citation: 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)</i> <i>See below regarding 220.6(d) projects.</i>	(8) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include, but are not limited to:
A Project Record or written Decision are <u>not required</u> for projects using 36 CFR 220.6 (d) categories. <i>If a <u>36 CFR 220.6 (d)</u> project, does the Decision Maker want it to go through the Small NEPA process?</i> Yes <i><u>If no</u>, this form does not need to be filled out nor submitted to the Small NEPA planner.</i> <i><u>If yes</u>, provide the category below, complete the remainder of this form and have Decision Maker submit it to the Small NEPA planner.</i>	

At what level does the Decision Maker want the project scoped?

Internal___ External*__X__

Internal scoping will be through the Small NEPA IDT, unless otherwise specified. Scoping would be documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist.

*External scoping will be with the public via a scoping letter, a legal notice, and the scoping letter posted on the NPCWNF website. Postcards with a link to the website/scoping letter will be used for larger mailings. The Project will only be scoped to the Tribe(s) et al (see * below), unless otherwise specified.*

**For external scoping, please to complete block below. Note: please enter "NA" if left empty on purpose*

Provide a list of the individuals, groups, agencies, etc. *, with their mailing address and/or email address, who will be included for external Scoping. DO NOT provide only a name.

** The Nez Perce and Coeur d'Alene Tribes will routinely be scoped. The following will also be included on all SN scoping/ mailing lists: Friends of the Clearwater, Idaho Conservation League, Thomas E. Peterson and Bill Mulligan.*

What Level of Analysis (below) does the Decision Maker want for the Project?

___ **Low level:** If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively low or unknown, the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (limited). In this case specialists would only do the checklist for each project. Documentation for low level analysis projects would be a completed checklist filled out by the specialists, including the name of the specialist who performed the analysis, the project name, and date it was completed. No other written documentation would be generated.

X **Moderate level:** If the project's level of public scrutiny is projected to be relatively moderate to high, then the line officer chooses who we would contact for scoping (a little broader). In this case, specialists would complete the checklist with the only write up being for items that are present and the rationale for the effects call. No write up would be given for items in the checklist that are not present. If the determination is no effect (which generally speaking, most CE's should have zero to very little adverse effects), then document why that determination was made in one paragraph or less. If the determination is an adverse effect, then why that determination was made would be written in less three paragraphs.

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

12B, 21B

What are the desired conditions (*relevant to your project*) for the Management Area(s) listed above?

MANAGEMENT AREA 12 (539,884 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 12 consists primarily of forested lands. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented as are a variety of commercially valuable, softwood tree species. A variety of physical and biological environments occur as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation (approximately 3,800-6,500 feet), and climatic factors. This management area occurs across the entire nonclassified portion of the Forest. Although this management area consists primarily of productive forest land, there are minor inclusions of nonforest and low productivity forest lands.

In addition to the 539,884 acres mapped for this management area, there are approximately 29,193 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis. Develop equal distribution of age classes to optimize sustained timber production. Manage at levels and intensities consistent with the schedules described in this plan to provide for other multiple uses and resources. Manage for roaded natural recreation.

The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 109,444 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 310,544 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 114,225 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

MANAGEMENT AREA 21 (45,140 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 21 consists of timber stands in timber productivity classes 3 and 4 that are old-growth, grand fir-Pacific yew vegetative communities that have been identified as moose winter range. These stands are generally located between the elevations of 4,000 to 6,000 feet on a variety of landtypes. These areas occur across the entire nonclassified portion of the Forest. These areas are key winter habitat for moose.

In addition to the 45,140 acres mapped for this management area there are approximately 17,780 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage the grand fir-Pacific yew plant communities to provide for a continuing presence of Pacific yew "suitable" for moose winter habitat.

The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 12,785 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 31,425 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 518 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

Desired conditions are described in Chapters 2 & 3 of the Nez Perce and Clearwater Forest Plans.

Is the project in an Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA)? No

If yes, which one?

** If yes, fill in the 'Project in Roadless Area' table below, **AND** complete a Briefing Paper - note map requirements. Provide the completed Briefing Paper to the Environmental Coordinator and Brian Riggers prior to scoping.*

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness Area, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No

If yes, which one(s)?

** If yes, contact Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us, 935-4270, BEFORE submitting this proposal, to discuss how the project may affect the designated area.*

Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? No

Are there Municipal Watersheds in the project area? No

If yes, which one?

Is the project located in an RHCA? A portion of the access route is partially within a riparian area.

Describe the existing condition of the project area.

The project area lies within previously disturbed and undisturbed areas within the Blanco and Ditch Creek drainages. The area is vegetated with predominately upland vegetation and timber of mixed species, with minor areas of riparian vegetation.

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action*?

The purpose of the proposed action is to test for gold values on unpatented mining claims. The need is to determine if sufficient quantities of valuable minerals exist to warrant further development of a mining operation.

Describe the Proposed Action.

What is provided will be used in the Scoping Letter (*external only*), by the resource specialists for their effects analyses, and in the Decision document.

Black Mammoth Gold Corporation proposes to conduct exploratory drilling in the Blanco Creek area on the Red River Ranger District. The project area will be accessed by USFS road 423 from Red River Hot Springs Road (#234), then along USFS 423 4.7 miles to where it forks at USFS 423A. Taking USFS 423A, continue on towards the project area where existing logging roads will be utilized to access the drill sites.

About 0.5-miles from the fork with 423, FSR 423A would require clearing of trees and other vegetation for 2525 ft. (0.5 miles) (Access Road A, Blanco Project 24K map). Alternately an old logging road would be reopened for 3430 ft. (0.65 miles) (Access Road B, Blanco Project 24K map), connecting with a logging road network that provide access to all of the drill sites. Access Road B is the preferred route as it would require only minor rehabilitation and no tree removal.

The proponent proposes to build a 735 ft. temporary road to access the drill sites in the Hercules mine area and a 360 ft. temporary road to the drill sites in the Pasadena mine target area. Temporary roads would be 12 ft. wide, and bermed per Best Management Practices as required. Road grades would not exceed 8%. One 8-inch culvert would be installed along the access road east and uphill of the Hercules mine where the road crosses the headwaters of the unnamed creek that traverses the area south of the Hercules mine (see Blanco Project 24K Map).

Ten 40 ft. x 80 ft. drill pads (0.74 acres total), and ten 10 ft. x 10 ft. (0.02 acres total) sumps would be constructed to facilitate drilling (see Blanco Project 24K Map). A total of 20 core holes (2 per site), ranging in depth from 300 to 500 feet, would be drilled using a diamond drill. Total drill footage planned is 6,000 feet.

Vehicles include 4x4 pickup trucks, a 4x4 off-road waterbuggy and a 4x4 one ton type truck or caterpillar type track mounted core drill. All fuel and other lubricants/fluids would be brought in daily by the driller or excavator operator using a tank, mounted in the bed of a pickup truck.

Equipment:

- a commercial-sized track mounted excavator to reopen old logging roads and to construct temporary roads and sumps
- one small truck or track-mounted diamond core drill
- one 1000 gal. capacity water truck
- a small water pump for drill water

Crew

- an excavator operator/tree faller to fall trees, build temp roads, drill pads and sumps, plus 1 truck
- a 3-man drill crew, plus 1 truck
- a project geologist and assistant, plus one truck
- a sanitary facility "porta potty" used and maintained at the project sites during operations
- living accommodations would be in Elk City.

Once access to the sites was established and the pads/sumps were built, drilling should take approximately 45 days. Drill cores would be taken to Elk City for logging and sampling.

Surface disturbance would be kept to a minimum and confined to previously disturbed areas as much as possible. During road and pad construction, small trees and slash would be stockpiled. Beargrass would be removed in clumps with the soil mass. Excavated topsoil and subsoil would be stored in separate piles.

List the Design Criteria / Mitigation Measures * to be included with the Proposed Action.

State of Idaho Best Management Practices for Mining will be incorporated into all mining and exploration proposals.

** Additional Design Criteria/Measures can be listed under "Additional Information" on the last page of this form*

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource for your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028

Fisheries – Derrick Bawdon, dbawdon@fs.fed.us;

Heritage – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us; 983-4040

Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cvalle@fs.fed.us; 963-4203

Minerals – Marty Jones, martinjones@fs.fed.us; 983-5158

Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270

Soils –

Wild and Scenic River – Chris Noyes, chnoyes@fs.fed.us; 935-4251

Wildlife – Jim Lutes, jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202

PROJECT MAPS

Please send – separate from this form and per the instructions outlined below – a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) with the project submission email.

- Make sure that the map layers can be turned on / off / are editable.
- Make sure the map(s) fits on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.

Provide at least one map, preferably “portrait” orientation, with the project area / features as:

- a Point, e.g. culvert, bridge, etc.,
- a Line, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc., and/or
- a Polygon, e.g. stand boundaries, treatment areas, etc.
 - Do not use a point if treating an area, use a polygon.
 - Points/lines/polygons need to be distinct and easily found on the map.
 - The project area / site needs to be centered on the map, especially if only one area/feature.

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map’s base layer.

- Do not add contour lines to the FV map unless needed for clarifying the proposed action. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.
 - If contour lines are needed, make sure they are distinguishable from other linear features such as roads, trails, streams, etc.
- A topo map can be substituted for the FV map. If using a topo map but the contour lines are not important the topo lines should be light gray or opaque.
- Regardless of base map, make sure there are identifiable elements, e.g. towns, roads, streams, etc. on the map to help locate the project area on the landscape and that the elements are clearly labeled.

The preferred map scale (typically 1:24K) is whatever scale best presents the project area’s location and proposed activities:

- If the 1:24K scale is too small (i.e. the project feature(s) – point/line/polygon – would be hard to find or would be indistinguishable on just one map), use a larger scale to show the overall project area (coarse scale map) and smaller scaled maps to show the project features (fine scale map).
- If the 1:24K scale is too big (i.e. the project feature is a tiny point or thin line lost/hard to find on the larger landscape), use a smaller scale to highlight the feature while ensuring there are elements on the map to identify the project’s location.
- If you need to make additional maps, please make as few as possible.

At a minimum, all maps should include (with the preferred but not set in stone location on the map):

- a Title (project name and district name only (please); centered at top)
- a Legend (features clearly labeled; lower right corner)
- a Scale (in half mile, e.g. 0 __ 0.25 __ 0.5 miles, or full miles, e.g. 0 __ 0.25 __ 0.5 __ 1.0 miles; lower left corner)
- a North Arrow (upper right corner)
 - Display all of the above in boxes with black outlines and a white backgrounds (not gray or yellow)
 - Do not ‘Halo’ the text or numbers or anything else on the map. Please.
 - The Scale needs to be large enough to read the numbers.

Finally, please include the mapmakers name and the date it was created on the map.

The Map(s) you provide will be used for Scoping the Public and the Tribes and in the Decision document. Please make sure they show – clearly, effectively, and professionally – what activity or activities are being proposed and where they are located on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists require the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activities before they will conduct their analyses. Providing the shapefile does not substitute for providing a pdf map.

The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile, or a location where the shapefile can be found, to the Small NEPA Planner (currently: jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us) by the time or shortly after the District Ranger submits this form.

- Shapefiles need to include the Project Name and have the Feature (culvert, bridge, etc.) labeled.
- Shapefiles need to include the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml.

PROPONENT: When submitting the shapefile(s) you must include in the email how the location(s) of the project feature(s), i.e. line, point, and/or polygon, were determined (see below):

- Field-collected GPS data;
- From existing corporate GIS data (provide name of GIS layer);
- Created (digitized) from an aerial photo;
- Created (digitized) from the existing corporate GIS data;
- Created (digitized) from the NPCLW Visitor Map;
- Other (describe).

Projects in Roadless Area

What is the Inventoried Roadless Area name? <i>O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Roadless Rule Info</i>	<u>Forest Plan IRA Name (if different):</u>
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management Classification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wild Land Recreation</i> • <i>Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance</i> • <i>Primitive</i> • <i>Backcountry Restoration</i> • <i>General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland</i> 	Classification(s):
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes* <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.23</i>	
Does the project involve cutting trees? For road/drill pad clearing only <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.24</i>	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes* <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.25</i>	

Proposed water draw sites.

